THE RESCUE:

OR,

THESPIAN SCOURGE.

BEING A

CRITICAL ENQUIRY

Into the Merit of a POEM, Intituled,

THESPIS.

With ſome CANDID REMARKS

ON THE

MODESTY, GOOD-NATURE, and IMPARTIALITY of that Piece.

Written in HUDIBRASTIC VERSE.

By JOHN BROWNSMITH.

A good Name in Man or Woman,
Is the immediate Jewel of their Souls.

SHAKESPEAR.

Truth is a profound Sea, and few there are that dare
Wade deep enough to find the bottom on't.

FARQUHAR.

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THE RESCUE:

OR,

THESPIAN SCOURGE.

A

CRITICAL ENQUIRY

Into the Merit of a POEM, intitled

THE RAPE:

With some CANDID REMARKS

UPON

MODERN, COMPARATIVE and PARTIAL Views

of that Piece.

Written by HYPERBOLETUS VERY.

By JOHN BROWNRIGG.

THE

RESCUE:

OR,

THESPIAN SCOURGE.

WHAT is the reaſon, maſter K---y,
You ſtarve your *mind*, to feed your *belly*?
There was a time, (not long ago)
I ween it was not with you ſo,
Potatoes then, and water'd fiſh,
Accounted were a *feſtive* diſh;

Your meagre viſage then declar'd,
Too plain, how *ill* your body far'd;
The ſages have a proverb, that
" The ſtudious man is ſeldom *fat*;"
The ſelf ſame ſages too will tell you,
What feeds the *mind*, will ſtarve the *belly*;
And *vice verſa*, oft we find,
A pamper'd *belly* ſtarves the *mind*:
Taylors, by living near the ſky,
'Tis ſaid have notions wond'rous *high*;
Perhaps like reaſons we may trace,
(For vulgar praiſe is but *diſgrace*,)
When firſt to ſcribble *you* began,
That you was ſtil'd a—*high-learnt man*;
Many have got a knack to rhyme it,
Without conſulting how they time it;
They'll write you pompous verſe, as faſt as
Itinerant doctors ſpread emplaſtras;

Alike

Alike the motives which invite
This man to ſpread, and *that* to write;
For intereſt's the view of either,
The general good of mankind---neither;
The *one*, with oſtentatious puff,
Obſcene grimace, and ſuch like ſtuff,
Exacts from fools, ſuperfluous pence,
By a mere outſide fair pretence;
His julep, bolus, powder, pill,
Like chip in ſoup diffuſe no ill;
What tho' it lacks th' Egyptian charm,
Of doing good, as nought of harm;
Enſues from its adminiſtration,
It claims ſome ſhare of approbation;
But *he* who dips in gall his pen,
To ſtigmatize *peculiar* men;
Or bends the bow with cruel aim,
And levels at his neighbours fame;

Merely

Merely becauſe he knows too well,
Th' inveterate traſh will always ſell;
Is like the pamper'd ſteed, whoſe feeding,
Makes him forget his *former* breeding;
And quite unmindful of his good,
Spurns the kind hand that lifts him food;
To *him*, not *ſatire's* laſh alone,
Shou'd be apply'd by every one,
Whom truth, and juſtice condeſcend,
To own for *their*, and *virtue's* friend;
But that ſame laſh ſhou'd make *him* ſmart,
Which oft's beſtow'd, at tail of cart,
On thoſe, whom leſs obnoxious cauſe,
Subject to th' cenſure of the laws.

The needy wretch, whom adverſe fate
Hath fix'd in a dependant ſtate;
Who, with repeated efforts tries
From famine's low abyſs to riſe;

As oft repuls'd, ſubſides again,
With but his labour for his pain;
Who ſtrives (with every honeſt art,)
To rive compaſſion's marble heart,
'Till quite ſurcharg'd with grief, and care,
He falls a prey to fell deſpair,
And of all means of life bereft,
Commits a *trifling*, *petty*, theft,
Some pity claims from every breaſt,
That feels, for *virtue*, thus diſtreſt.

Vain is their project, who intend,
By *juſt* gradations to aſcend
Fortune's high ſummit----fickle dame!
She's the mere weathercock of *fame*;
That ſhifts with every gale that blows,
Show'ring her bounty moſt on thoſe
Who leaſt deſerve; the *fool* and *knave* are
Peculiar objects of her favour;

To *real* merit ever blind,
Alas! how oft in life we find,
A gaudy *villain*, with full bags,
And needy *honeſty* in rags.

The man who filches my good name,
Or baſely barters *others* fame,
To ſerve *his* ſordid, private ends,
Can ne'er be rank'd with *virtue's* friends:
Society ſhou'd ſure diſclaim him,
And *public ſcorn* combine to ſhame him.

THESPIS, a man of no *ſmall* note,
A pompous book hath lately wrote;
Wherein, he promiſes the age,
A view *impartial* of the STAGE;
Each *actor*, threatens to diſſect,
And ſhew his *beauty*, or *defect*;
But there appears in every line,
A very different deſign;

If *ſuch* he e'er meant to purſue,
He loſes oft' the point in view;
And foreign to th' intended plan,
Diſſects not th' *actor*, but the *man*:
Yet ſcorns *his* talents to diſplay,
And carve in th' common vulgar way;
Think you that *he* diſſects an *actor*,
As *doctors* do a *malefactor*?
So critical, and circumſpect ſir,
As if providing for a *lecture*;
Or that like common artiſts *he*,
Cuts with that care, and decency,
Wou'd pleaſe the eye of every gueſt
That is invited to the feaſt?
No; the methods he has taken ſuch are,
Might challenge any *carrion-butcher*;
Who (without either rule, or bounds,)
Hews daily junks, for hungry hounds,

And

And having caſt them once before 'em,
With eager haſte, they ſtrait devour 'em.

Such THESPIS is, and ſuch the *town*,
For mark how glib they'll ſwallow down,
(Without one grain of provocation,)
A *taſteleſs* meſs of defamation;
Whether a *miniſter* is roaſted,
Or a fam'd leading *beauty* toaſted,
They'll *this* approve, or *that* condemn,
The caſe is juſt alike to them,
If lady *faſhion* points the way,
They want the power to ſay her *nay*.

The muſe will now with nice inſpection,
Trace THESPIS thro' each different ſection,
And where *rank falſhood* ſhall appear,
In robes, which *truth* alone ſhou'd wear,
Fearleſs of *his* indignant frown,
Will ſhew her naked to the town;

If ſhe a ſingle line perceives,
Where juſtice *her* impreſſion leaves,
With equal candour ſhe will ſhew,
The *rare* commodity to view.

First Garrick (general of the ſtage)
Adorns the yet unſullied page;
His title to a name, we know,
Juſtice had ſettled long ago;
Beyond the reach of envious verſe,
Or foul-mouth'd *ſcandal* to aſperſe,
Too well the artful ſlanderer knew,
To *him* unbounded praiſe was due;
He therefore, *ſelf-convicted* ſtood,
And held *himſelf* correction's rod.

Next *him*, with ſome degree of favour,
Which ſeems in part of truth to ſavour,
He places Lee, in Holland's ſeat,
And fain wou'd have him thought as *great*;

But here the peeviſh ſelf-will'd town,
Adopt a judgment of their own;
Howe'er he plumes, and bellows forth,
His figure, and intrinſic worth;
And tho' he arms him *cap a pee*,
Will ne'er miſtake for HOLLAND, LEE;
Yet has this Lee, in many parts,
A way to *ſteal* upon our hearts;
And is indeed, to rate him fair,
A *good*, and *ſerviceable* play'r.

HOLLAND, he mingles with the group,
As Frenchmen ſcatter herbs in ſoup:
And ſerves him garniſh'd at the feaſt,
A *diſh* diſguſtful to the taſte;
And yet I muſt be bold to ſay,
Had he been ſerv'd in th' *common* way;
And next his maſter GARRICK plac'd,
No diſh the table more had grac'd.

Fourth in this bill of fare is POWELL,
A *diſh* that all the *city* know well;
Who hits the taſte of every gueſt,
And is, the *turtle* of the feaſt;
It has been thought too much for *one*,
To dreſs this *dainty diſh* alone;
Yet has this bold *Hibernian* cook,
A taſk ſo arduous undertook,
And tho' 'tis dreſt with *attic fire*,
Does much more *ſeaſoning* require;
E'er it can poſſibly go down,
With folks at *t'other end* o' th' town.

BEAUMONT and FLETCHER of't we find,
In frontiſpieces are conjoin'd,
Not with deſign to prove alone,
That this ſame *couple* make but *one*;
Nor on the contrary to ſhew,
That twice the ſum of *one*, make *two*;

But

But to inform the world that *they*,
Conjunctively did write a *play*;
So CAUTHERLY and BENSLEY join'd,
(On ſtrict enquiry we ſhall find)
Spite of their conſequential airs,
Compoſe a----*gemini* of plays.

If aught can plead the leaſt excuſe,
Or palliate the groſs abuſe,
On *others* laviſh'd; it muſt need,
From this one circumſtance proceed;
Where he ſo *juſt* and *truly* rates,
The genuine, ſterling, worth of YATES;
That *envy* here approves his plan,
And owns he's drawn the very man.

The muſe wou'd next delight to ſing,
The praiſes of her darling KING.
Did not too ſcant allowance make
The taſk *too long* to undertake,

For

For well ſhe knows ſhou'd ſhe engage,
In ſuch a theme---and ſwell her page,
With full recital of *his* worth,
How juſtly he excites our mirth;
She wou'd not have a line to ſpare,
For *thoſe*, who claim an equal ſhare.

VERNON it ſeems, with all his arts,
And pow'r of ſoft'ning *other* hearts;
Altho' "*he's bleſt with ſuch a ſtrain,*
"*As charms us to the verge of pain,*"
That flinty breaſt can ne'er alarm,
That's proof againſt all *muſic's* charm;
For notwithſtanding all *he* ſays,
VERNON has great abilities.

PALMER too long has been neglected,
And now's moſt ſhamefully diſſected;
Whoe'er has ſeen in Bobadil,
His tryal of the actor's ſkill;

Or when the loud *Paroschio* bawls,
Enough to rend the very walls;
With what a truly comic ſtrain,
He does the *tyrant's* part maintain;
Muſt yield the tribute of applauſe,
And own they ne'er had *juſter* cauſe.

With ſuch nice care, and circumſpection,
He finiſhes his next diſſection,
That *truth* herſelf muſt needs approve,
And call the mangled carcaſs Love.

When ſtrong deſcriptive marks we find,
Impreſs ideas on the mind,
Which to imagination ſhew,
A form, we cannot fail to know;
Juſtice, and *truth* applaud the plan,
And take the *picture* for the *man*:
Thus BADDELEY is held to view,
And charg'd with nought, but what's his *due*.

Too

Too ſcurril now the THESPIAN muſe,
Aſſumes her wonted ſtrain *abuſe*;
And in a language, *new*, as *odd*,
Attacks the trim, briſk ſmatt'rer DODD.
A ſtranger ever to the ſpleen,
And that mechanic word *chagrin*;
Who yawns, and takes a pinch of ſnuff,
Then damns it all for---wretched ſtuff;
Wou'd all like *him*, when thus attack'd,
With calm, reſign'd indiff'rence act;
The edge of *ſatire*, ſoon of courſe,
Wou'd blunted be, and loſe it's force.
The common drudge, who every night
Ruſhes familiarly to ſight;
Whoſe merit of't we under-rate,
'Cauſe not *ſuperlatively* great,
With ſtrict propriety we deem,
The lab'ring *thill-horſe* of the team;

Not

Not ſo with WESTON, he appears
Six times in---half a dozen years;
Then *comet-like* he, in a blaze,
Deſcends, and fills us with amaze;
And we confeſs the poet's *ſatire*,
Sticks cloſe to *him*, as he to *nature*.

HAVARD is one of half a ſcore,
That nightly tug the *lab'ring oar*;
Whoſe long acquaintance with good ſenſe,
Prevents his giving us offence,
And tho' he no ſuperior ſkill
Can boaſt---there is a ſomething ſtill;
A free, and unaffected eaſe,
That (ſpite of years) will ever pleaſe.

Next follows one, who half the ſeaſon,
For ſome peculiar, latent reaſon;
Like Phœbus on a lowry day,
Only by *fits* his beams diſplay;

So,

So, as *that planet* gathers force,
And gilds the day, with *loftier* courſe,
He ſeems as 'twere, to take a *cue*,
For blazing oft'ner to the view;
'Till having ran th' accuſtom'd round,
He in another ſphere is found;
Where *wit* and *humour* hold their ſeat,
And give the *ſummer's* glorious treat;
There no dark ſky is ever ſeen,
But each day's pleaſant and ſerene;
Juſt to his worth, among the firſt,
Here *candid judgment* places HURST;
Unclouded here he ſhines more bright,
And beams freſh *luſtre* on the night.
Stab'd with the *poet's* new-whet lance,
See mangled MOODY next advance;
The victim of inſatiate rage,
And *ſcandal* of a *ſcurril* page;

Tho' *once* from his intended plan,
The poet ſtray'd to praiſe the *man*;
Will honeſt candour e'er excuſe
A deviation to *abuſe*?
Tho' Moody be as rough as *Jack-Tar*,
He always pleaſes as an actor;
And what pleads ſtrong in's commendation,
O'Cutter-like, ne'er quits his ſtation;
But ſtill maintains the doubtful fight,
By always---playing in his *light*.

Now, whether as *ironick* ſtrain,
This coinage of the poet's brain,
We ſhould regard?---is yet a doubt,
The *critics* cavil much about;
If *K---y* ranks with *Ackman's* friends,
He ſurely no *abuſe* intends;
Yet numbers rack their brains to pry
Into the *wherefore* and the *why*,

He has out-ſtretch'd true friendſhip's line,
And drawn him ſo---*exceeding fine!*

The careful poet next has ſhewn,
So *near* a likeneſs to the town;
That without any name at all,
We ſhou'd the picture BRANSBY call.
AICKIN inherits "inborn eaſe,"
And "various requiſites to pleaſe;"
So THESPIS ſays, but what they are,---
The *town* had better judge by far.

Why ſhou'd a baſe, invective ſtrain,
That gives each *thinking* reader pain;
And ill-bred, perſonal reflection,
The ſubject be of *this* diſſection?
One might expect the poet's aim
Wou'd be to mark *Theatric fame*;
And not have given in it's ſtead,
A lecture upon BURTON's *head*:

Why

Why did he not at firſt---apprize
The town---and fairly advertiſe
This *lecture*?---as in various parts,
He comprehends both *heads*, and *hearts*;
Sure he forgets a time may come,
When criminals ſhall meet their doom;
And when *deſign*, or bare *intent*,
Receive their ſhare of *puniſhment*;
Then BURTON may---" with all that *lead*,
" That *fate* has giv'n him for a *head*,"
Plead right of *turn*, and take the *whim*,
To hear a *lecture* read on *him*.

Now comes a taſk, the cautious muſe,
Unequal to, wou'd fain refuſe;
But that too far embark'd---indeed,
She can't with *honeſty* recede;
Too well alas! ſhe knows the fair,
Shou'd her *peculiar* favours ſhare;

Yet where depravity of taſte,
Lays all inherent beauties waſte;
Or haughty, over-bearing pride,
Turns *juſt propriety* aſide;
She will,' (to pole, as needle true)
Give each reſpective fair her due,
Like *Juno's* ſwans, a warbling pair,
Firſt, the rude poet's *fetters* wear;
VINCENT and WRIGHT---O! may they long,
Alternate charm in ſpeech, as *ſong!*
But niggard nature ſeems quite loth,
To place in *one*, the pow'r of *both*;
Hence 'tis that we in common find,
Performers of the *ſinging kind*,
Whoſe pow'rs th' extremeſt note can reach,
In *alt*---oft lack the pow'r of *ſpeech*.
As if enraptur'd with her form,
As much too flattering as warm;

In high extravagance of phraſe,
He lanches forth, in BADD'LEY's praiſe;
And ſeems determin'd to commend,
Merely to prove himſelf *friend*:
Ophelia's wild and frantic notes,
On which the THESPIAN *muſe* ſo doats,
Afford no ſort of *proof*, whereby
We may *intrinſic* merit try;
It therefore muſt too plain appear,
He has been ſomewhat *partial* here.

In artful, ſtrange, ambiguous ſenſe,
Which, tho' it lauds, yet gives offence;
BARRY a double torrent ſtems,
One line applauds, the next condemns;
But plac'd the two extremes between,
Her worth may centre in the *mean*.

In line the fifth, page thirty-three,
You will the name of HOPKINS ſee:

Now,

Now, wide again the poet ſtrays,
And each invidious line betrays,
His want of judgment to explore,
That merit all the world adore;
So ill his phraſe, the theme befits,
We fear the man has loſt his *wits*;
Long in the annals of the ſtage,
(Spite of the furious *critics rage*)
CLIVE has that foremoſt rank maintain'd,
Her early worth ſo juſtly gain'd;
And will with credit fill her caſt
As long as *ſtrength* and *mem'ry* laſt.

The ſprightly POPE, who evermore
Engages the continual roar,
So rude he treats, 'tis plainly ſeen,
Again, he's troubled with the *ſpleen*;
Vapours produce, moſt ſtrange effects,
And much they ſay, the mind perplex;

Th'

Th' imagination paints to view,
Strange, hideous forms---and thinks 'em true;
Now *pigmies*, magnified appear,
And ſeem huge *giant* forms to wear;
He who of's reaſon's thus beguil'd,
What is he, but a ſenſeleſs child?
And ſhall the man, whoſe wit's diſeas'd
Mark when ſound judgment's to be pleas'd?
And lay down inconſiſtent laws,
To rob the *worthy* of applauſe?
Or ſhall we (having once perceiv'd,
How her dictator is aggriev'd)
Let *juſtice* in *her* turn preſide,
And take our *reaſon* for a guide?
If ſo---there's ſure unbounded ſcope,
To ſing the praiſes of a POPE.

Tho' ABINGTON, (whoſe motley round,
Does with *variety* abound)

Poſſeſs

Poſſeſs as much theatric fire,
As *many* of her parts require;
Yet there are *others*, I cou'd name,
Without incurring much of blame,
Wherein by too great confidence,
She gives a general offence,
That ſh'as vivacity and eaſe,
And oft'ner charms us, than diſpleaſe;
Th' impartial muſe conſents to own,
And leaves the *reſt* to th' candid town.

PRITCHARD a favourite of fame,
Envy defies to wound *her* name,
Among the firſt theatric bands,
So *high* a ſtation ſhe commands;
That none but *Churchill's* pen ſhould treat,
Of merit ſo extremely *great*;
Or *Goldſmith's* numbers ſally forth
The guard of ſuch exalted worth.

YATES he has plac'd ſo *very high*,
Sh' appears the *Juno* of the ſky;
If all like THESPIS wou'd adore her,
She'd ſhortly drive the world before her;
But be it known, however bright
This *goddeſs* ſhines, in th' orb of light
Where he has fix'd her; ten to one,
(For ſpecks are ſeen upon the *ſun*;)
Some envious *critic*, full of ſpleen,
Twixt *her*, and *fame*, may intervene,
And in her full meridian height,
Veil all her *beauties* from our ſight:
Example, more than precept draws,
And folly's led, by *critic* laws;
Herſelf unable to decide,
Admits *them* only for her guide;
Tho' pique, or prejudice prevail,
And *both* conjunctively aſſail,

True merit, in her full career,
One might ſuppoſe ſhe'd nought to fear;
How few the numbers of the *wiſe*,
Compar'd with *folly's* vaſt allies;
Give but the word the *latter* all,
Will arm'd appear, at *envy's* call,
Detraction too, impatient ſtands,
To join with *their*, her kindred bands;
Your *critics* are a ſort of ſpies,
That prey on inconſiſtencies;
To *them* as eaſy 'twere to prove,
That lank-jaw'd WEST's as fat as LOVE,
Or as an actor *Dagger Marr*,
Shou'd rank with GARRICK, on a par:
As by the dint of common ſenſe,
That CLIVE, or POPE, has excellence.
The promis'd taſk compleated now,
(How rude ſo'er the numbers flow;)

The jaded muſe, impatient grown,
A-while, her well-worn pen lays down,
And waits the judgment of the *town*.
To *that alone* ſubmits her cauſe,
Nor dreads the rigour of it's laws;
Strongly poſſeſt, her *honeſt* views,
All imperfections will excuſe;
And tho' ſhe boaſts no *eminence*,
Truth will ſupply the place of *ſenſe*;
Here reſts a-while, nor fears to eat,
While *Theſpis* gives the ſumptuous treat;
Who now, (with a redoubled force)
Has furniſh'd out his *ſecond courſe*;
Which, in its turn, ſhall be ſurvey'd,
And each reſpective *diſh* diſplay'd;
With ſuch ſtrict care ſhe means to do't,
Not e'en his *ſauce* ſhall 'ſcape her note.

FINIS.